

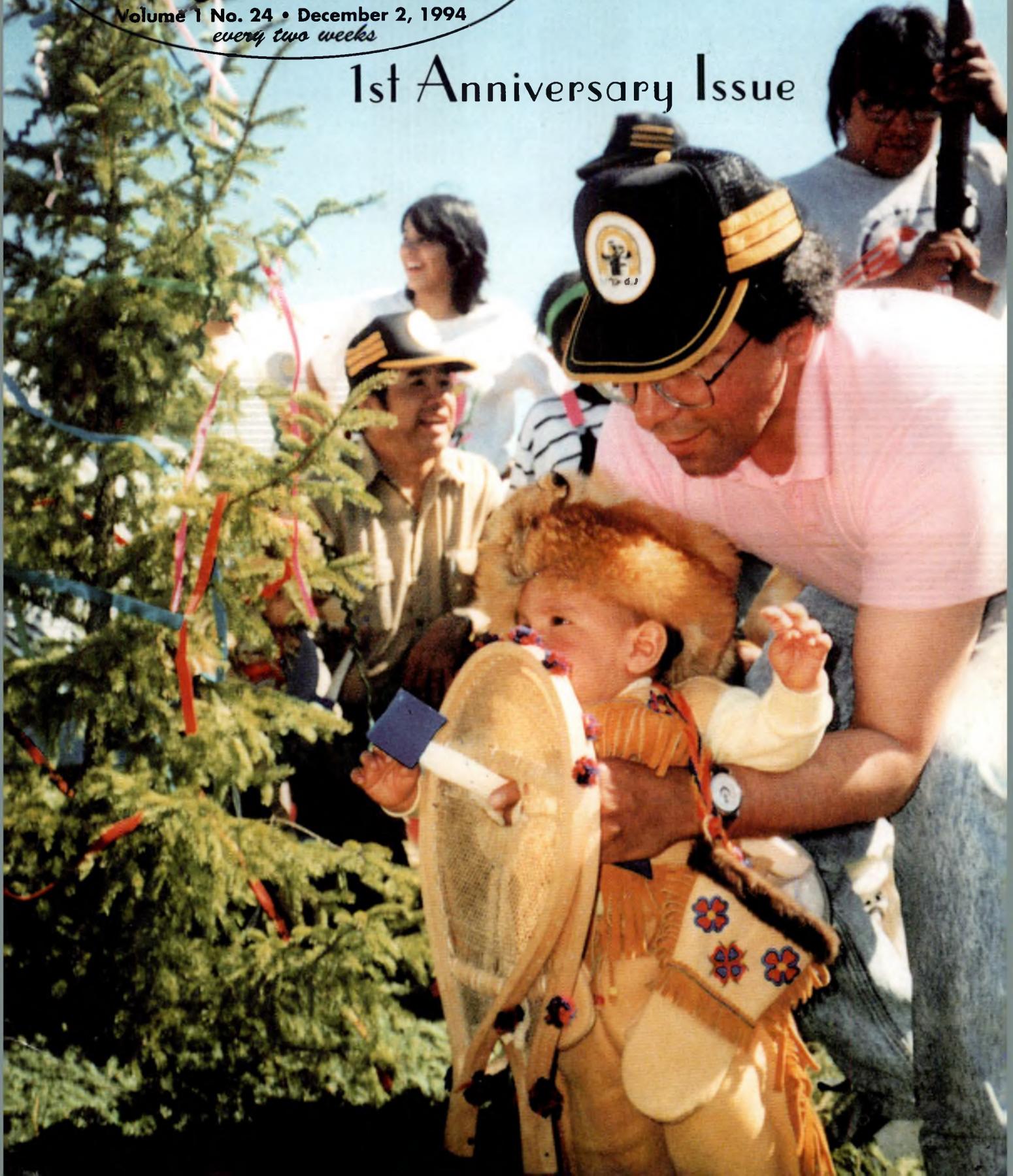
the Nation

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ALISON RAMSEY

The Nationites: (back, from left) Will Nicholls, Neil Diamond, Ernest Webb, Alex Roslin, (centre row) Linda Ludwick, Katerina Cizek, Brian Webb, Catherine Bainbridge, (front) Celya Lister

OUR WALKING OUT

This is our walking out ceremony. *The Nation* has been in existence for one year now. I never knew *The Nation* would develop into anything like this, much less make it to a year.

I knew communication is an integral part of any society, but it really hit home when we were setting up at Mamweedow (the annual festival at Fort George). We were going to set up a mobile radio station. We were looking for keys to the building we were going to set up in. We went to a house where we thought the keys were. There weren't there.

But an Elder was. Daniel Rupert. We shared tea. We were talking about the weather... He then asked what we were doing. We told him we were going to set up the tower for the station. He then asked, "Akuut-ha chawiakabuutaiyakw Uukshapchikin?" (Is that where you will set up the shaking tent?) I was stunned. For him to compare the technology of today with a ceremony of long ago really had me thinking. Especially with everything that goes with that ceremony.

I had felt there was a rejection of today's modern technology. That it went against Cree values. But the rejection was the monologue of information which we have no control over and doesn't begin to reflect our world. That day I felt proud to work in communications.

The flood of information in our communities was not our own. Dialogue started with our radio stations. But it has to go further. We have to take the caribou by the antlers and develop all aspects of communications to fit our world. It is for the people.

We started *The Nation* with the realization of the importance of being able to freely speak your mind and to exchange ideas with respect, fairness and accuracy. We can only hope *The Nation* is contributing to the overall development of communications in the Cree world. There are people who wish *The Nation* would just go away. Sorry, but there are too many things to discuss.

We here at *The Nation* do know the balancing act is sometimes tight. For people writing in, when does creative criticism and the statement of facts become libelous or dangerous, politically or financially? I guess that's why we get so many letters from a "concerned Cree" or a "concerned youth," "concerned resident" or what have you.

We enjoy everything we receive. We hope you will keep sending your ideas, thoughts and dialogue to *The Nation* so they can be shared. Shared with the people. We need your input so we can reflect your community. Our community. We also need "hard news." It's been one year and we are thankful. We want to acknowledge the Creator for showing us the beauty of life and the guidance provided.

There are so many people to thank for helping and guiding us to where we are today. The people on the photo up there are the main team. Many people believed in us. Many people worked hard and long, sometimes for no pay, to get us to where we are today. To those people we are eternally grateful.

We hopped on *The Nation* and started a journey into the unknown. And the river has opened up a little bit at a time for us. With your help we can overcome the portages. So we can travel the voyage together.

BY ERNEST WEBB

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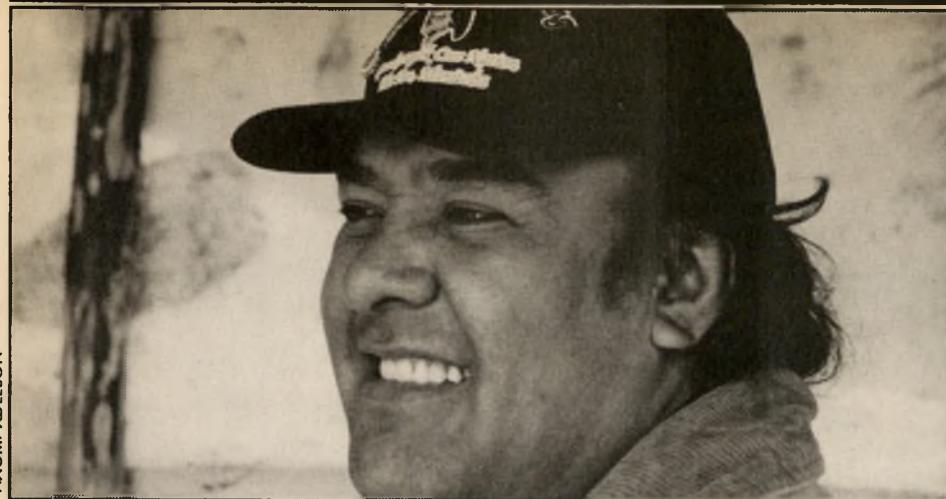
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CHECK OUT THE NATION
CLASSIFIEDS ON PAGE 25. DON'T
FORGET TO GET YOUR X-MAS AND
NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS IN EARLY.

COVER PHOTO

Walking out ceremony in
Ouje-Bougoumou.

Taken by Caroline Coonishish.



Robbie Dick, former Chief of Whapmagoostui.

V FOR VICTORY

When I first heard that Great Whale had been postponed indefinitely, all I felt was disbelief. I had to check things out myself. I mean, given the tenacity with which Hydro-Quebec promoted the Great Whale project, I did not think the war would be over so soon. No celebrations for this boy until I checked out the facts.

The facts: 1) The same day as Parizeau's announcement, Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come was back in Washington for the second time slamming the PQ not only on the sovereignty question but also with the biggest ace the Crees had, Great Whale. 2) Four environmental review committees slammed Hydro-Quebec's \$256-million study on Great Whale. 3) Going ahead with the project in this light would have just confirmed the Grand Chief's allegations in U.S. eyes. 4) It was a great public relations move on Parizeau's part while allowing him to remain "true" to the Quebec voting public. And 5) even though it was postponed indefinitely, Hydro-Quebec is still continuing with the environmental review process.

So you can see Parizeau lost nothing in making this announcement. Since Hydro-Quebec has to redo the study and this might take years (two or more, according to the PQ government), the Great Whale project would've been put on hold indefinitely anyhow.

What the Crees have gained though is far more than just time. What we have gained is immeasurable. We are the first First Nation to have successfully said no to the dominant society's plans for us and our land. We have regained our rightful control over the territory that the Creator left in our care.

We thought we had lost that in the 1970s and many of our people felt lost because of that. In the 1970s we were bulldozed over and shown we did not really control anything in our Cree world. This was something I always felt to be at the root of many problems that we as a people have experienced since that time. It is always hard to deal with the fact that strangers to your way of life and land say you are nothing and that all you are and believe in is insignificant.

Today with this victory we proved that to be a lie. The Crees do matter and we have proven our worth as a people, a culture and a Nation. Twenty years ago, we lacked the knowledge and language of the outside that we needed. We gained that knowledge and learned about the dominant society. In that time, the Crees made many allies around the world from the grassroots to the highest levels of the outside societies. It was this concentrated effort by Crees and their allies that made Premier Parizeau say Great Whale was going to be indefinitely delayed. I feel great pride in what we have accomplished.

The Cree war is not over and many battles remain in order to protect our rights and regain those Cree rights that were stolen. But these battles are winnable. We have proven this is possible and this knowledge makes us stronger. Our spirits will be lighter in these battles as the load is not as heavy as it once was. Great Whale was the symbol of our opposition to the erosion of our way of life and rights. We have a major victory and will continue to see more victories in the future. Now we must put the same effort into the rest of the problems facing us, whether it be our personal life, the community or Nation.

But now today is the time for a celebration of the spirit, strength and perseverance of the Cree people.

BY WILL NICHOLLS

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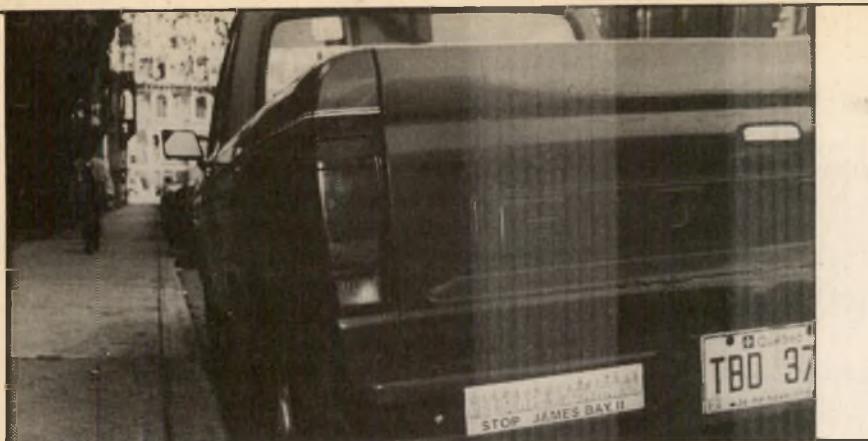
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CREES JUBILANT OVER GREAT WHALE VICTORY

November 18 was a day of jubilation in James Bay as the news spread that Premier Jacques Parizeau had indefinitely postponed the Great Whale River Project.

Some couldn't believe their ears. One Whapmagoostui Cree who fought the project for the band stood holding the phone for two minutes in silence when he heard the news, then said, "This must be some cruel joke."

A feast was planned in Whapmagoostui. Brian Craik, the Grand Council's federal relations director, said he was flying so high he had to be scraped off the ceiling.

"It will take time to sink in. It's hard to believe," said Robbie Dick, who fought the project for several years as Chief of Whapmagoostui.

"The people have accomplished a great task. With this project, we used our own beliefs, our own way of looking at the Earth and the environment. We followed the direction of our Elders and we have come to this point where we have succeeded to a degree. This is how strong it is when we follow our traditions," he said.

Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come called Parizeau's announcement a "courageous" decision. "This generation of Crees and this generation of Quebecers has said no to mega-projects. It was a great joy to know we were right," he said.

The Grand Chief said the postponement will give Crees precious time to think about other issues. "With Great Whale out of the way, it allows time for the land to heal, time for the Cree people to adapt to the changes that happened after the first project."

But he warned that it's still unclear whether Great Whale is completely off the table, or whether this is just a temporary postponement of five or 10 years. The Grand Chief called on Parizeau to stop the ongoing

environmental review process of Great Whale. If that process of hearings continues, Hydro-Quebec could still secure all the permits it needs to go ahead with construction. Then the utility could just wait a few years until the political situation is more favourable and start construction with little notice, permits already in hand.

That scenario was given added life by the comments of Parizeau aide Hubert Thibault, just hours after the Premier's pronouncement on Friday. "We are giving Hydro-Quebec no instructions to stop their preparation of the project," Thibault said.

"Parizeau said Great Whale is on ice. Ice can be thawed," commented Grand Chief Coon Come.

That was a concern also raised by Kuujjuarapik Mayor Anthony Ittoshat. "My first reaction was that we went through this before in the late 1970s. We're going through the same thing again. It's just a question of how long we're going to wait," he said.

"The way Parizeau put it was we're not going to scrap the project forever."

Ittoshat said Parizeau may have postponed the \$13-billion mega-project because of a report released earlier on the day of Nov. 18 that slammed the project. In their report, four federal and provincial committees studying Great Whale issued devastating criticisms of a \$256-million environmental review conducted by Hydro-Quebec. The committees said the review was grossly inadequate and recommended over 300 revisions.

Hydro-Quebec issued a press release the following Monday, Nov. 21, saying it will have to find other ways of meeting its projections of energy demand. The utility mentions the Ste-Marguerite hydro-project, already under con-

HYDRO STUDY DEEPLY FLAWED, SAY PANELS

Hydro-Quebec has wasted \$256 million on studies of the Great Whale project that don't meet environmental standards.

Four federal and provincial committees studying the project said on Nov. 18 that Hydro's studies—conducted over a period of 11 years—fail to answer key questions about the mega-project and have "major inadequacies."

Just hours after the committees issued their joint report, Premier Parizeau announced Great Whale would be indefinitely postponed.

The joint report said Hydro's study "suffers from a number of major inadequacies which prevent a clear definition and prediction of the repercussions of the proposed project to the extent that it becomes extremely difficult to adequately estimate its real costs and benefits."

Overall, the committees recommend over 300 changes to Hydro's report. They say the report fails to establish whether the energy produced by Great Whale is in fact needed. There is also lack of knowledge about the effects on the Crees and Inuit.

"The knowledge of local communities about their own environment, which would be essential to an adequate project evaluation is, for all practical purposes, absent," say the committees.

Their report says Hydro doesn't even know when it plans to build Great Whale. The utility says it will need energy from the project around 2005, but some of its own projections show Great Whale may not be needed until after 2031.

The report also criticizes Hydro for ignoring the project's effects on the Sanikiluaq Inuit of the Belcher Islands.

The negative verdict is all the more striking because two-thirds of the members on the committees are appointed by the provincial and federal governments under rules established in the James Bay Agreement. The Crees and Inuit appoint only one-third of the committee members.

—Alex Roslin

BY ALEX ROSLIN

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

the Nation

HQ CAUGHT "PANTS DOWN"...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

struction, and the Eastmain project, for which Hydro says it already has the required authorization.

Luis Eguren, coordinator of the Cree anti-Great Whale campaign in Montreal, said Parizeau's announcement came as a big surprise to most observers. "No one at Hydro knew. Parizeau caught everybody with their pants down."

Indeed, when we spoke to a Hydro PR person just an hour after Parizeau's announcement, she seemed grim and doggedly stood by the utility's work to date on the Great Whale project. "We've always felt our environmental impact study was of high quality," said Hydro spokeswoman Helen Mayer.

Eguren added the sovereigntist government was hoping that by postponing Great Whale it could score a PR victory against the Crees. "Parizeau really needs to shut up Matthew. Matthew is killing him on the international front. He needs to get Matthew out from between his legs."

Oddly enough, Parizeau's announcement came just hours after Grand Chief Coon Come spoke again in Washington, D.C. about Cree rights. The Cree leader chided Quebec separatists for their "ethnic nationalism" and criticized the PQ government's support for the extinguishment policy, which he described as "racist" and "colonialist."

Come back home!

Letter to the Editor:

As a concerned Cree youth of the Cree Nation, I have heard a lot of youth of the nine Cree communities asking why our Grand Chief and the Deputy Grand Chief are living in luxury houses in Ottawa while our people are suffering in the Cree communities due to the lack of housing. Enough excuses already, we have heard enough of them!!

During the campaigning process in 1993, the Deputy Grand Chief stated that he would move back home if he was elected. Ha!! I thought it was a complete joke when he said that. We all know politicians love making promises to the people saying, "I'll do that, I'll do this, blah, blah, blah... if I am elected," but they are all the same: ALL TALK—NO ACTION!!!

If we need a change like what we talked about at the Cree Nation Gathering in Old Nemaska in early September, that is one of the changes we need, our leadership in a Cree community. We have an office in Nemaska and it is not being used at all by any of the leadership. We do not need our leaders somewhere down south hiding behind their lawyers and consultants!

If we talk about change, get the leadership back in the communities.

I'll give you an example. Let us say the Prime Minister went on national television saying he is going to work in Washington, D.C. not in Ottawa! What would the people of Canada do? They would not agree with it. The same with the Cree Nation, we do not agree with it either, the leadership living in Ottawa. COME BACK HOME!!!

If the leadership does not move back home, I'll clearly say it out loud, "RESIGN!!"

To *The Nation*, keep the good work up!! Thank you!!

A concerned Cree youth member

Ed. Note: Letters to the editor should be signed by the writer with a phone number. We will print letters anonymously but you should still include your name if you raise serious issues. Libelous letters will not be accepted or will be edited. Letters printed are not necessarily the opinion of The Nation.

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NEIL DIAMOND

FRIENDSHIP CENTRES COULD LOSE 75% OF FUNDS

Canada is planning to cut up to 75 per cent of its funding to Native friendship centres across the country.

There has even been talk of cutting all funding to the 99 friendship centres in Canada.

News of the cutbacks left staff at Montreal's Native Friendship Centre stunned when they first heard it from federal officials just weeks ago. Montreal's centre is already having a hard time serving 44,500 Natives with an annual subsidy of only \$200,000 from the federal Heritage Ministry.

The friendship centres in Chibougamau and Val d'Or will also be affected by the cuts.

"We don't agree with it," said Ida LaBillois, executive director of the Montreal centre. "We will lobby against it."

Ida said for every penny the centre gets from the government, it provides three pennies worth of services. She also said the cutbacks will hurt the centre's effort to find a new building.

Getting a new building is one of the centre's top priorities because of a severe problem of overcrowding that often borders on the absurd.

Linda Arkwright, the centre's capital campaign development officer, is responsible for finding the new building. Until recently, her office was located in a bathroom. Now, she works out of the centre's food depot along with two other staff members.

Due to lack of space, the centre had to close its library. Every day, the centre offers free meals to 60 to 100 people, but there's nowhere for them to sit. There are no conference rooms.

BY ALEX ROSLIN

and there's nowhere for staff to meet with Natives in private to discuss confidential problems. The centre's three-story house on Cote-des-Neiges provides 98 different services to its clients.

"We're bursting at the seams," says Linda. "You can't work like this."

But even the effort to find a new building has run into problems with the government, this time at city hall.

The centre's staff has looked at 40 to 45 buildings over the last five years without finding an appropriate building. The problem in a lot of cases is not the building itself but a lack of cooperation from city hall.

The city has thrown up obstacles by saying that buildings the centre is interested in are not zoned for use by a non-profit group. Behind the lack of cooperation seems to lurk a lack of sensitivity to the needs of urban Natives.

"It's unbelievable, their zoning laws," said Linda. "I don't think the previous administration at city hall realized the importance of the centre for urban aborigines."

Linda said one city employee asked her why the centre doesn't look around for a building "where all the Natives hang out," somewhere on Ste-Catherine St. "I think the city needs to be educated that not all aboriginal people live on reserves, not all aboriginal people drink," said Linda.

She hopes the new city government elected in November will be more helpful.

The centre expects it will need \$1.5 million for the new building. Neither Ottawa nor Quebec are willing to help out with any money, so the centre has been doing private fundraising. In two years, it has raised \$100,000.

LONG JAIL-TERMS FOR SM-3 PROTEST

Two members of the Nitassinan Coalition and a Belgian photographer have been sentenced to prison terms ranging from three to seven months for being present at the blockade against the Ste-Marguerite hydro-project last June.

The Nitassinan Coalition was also fined \$25,000. The group set up the blockade in an effort to stop work on the project by Hydro-Quebec.

Photographer Olivier Renard was arrested June 14 along with another photographer when the SQ police removed the blockade. Renard was later released and thought there would be no charges, reports the *Montreal Mirror*.

Renard was trying to become a Canadian citizen but the incident could ruin his chances. A press rights group, Reporters sans Frontières, is petitioning the Quebec delegation in Brussels and writing letters to the Premier on Renard's behalf.

—Nation staff

HYDRO POISONING FISH, CREEES SAY

Power utilities should be fined if they build hydro-projects that release too much mercury into the environment, said officials of the Grand Council of the Crees at a House of Commons committee in mid-November.

Testifying before the standing committee on the environment, Bill Namagoose said mercury contamination caused by hydro-electric dams has led to severe health and social problems in the Cree communities.

"The psychological impact on the Crees and the environment has been tremendous," he said. "The change to eating store-bought food as opposed to fish has led to all kinds of health problems. We have problems of obesity, diabetes and high blood pressure."

Namagoose called on Ottawa to amend the Environmental Protection Act to include regulations that would drastically reduce mercury contamination by future Hydro-Quebec projects, reports the *Montreal Gazette*.

Brian Craik, federal relations director at the Grand Council, said mercury levels in some James Bay fish are six times higher than the norm allowed by the World Health Organization. Currently, the Environmental Protection

BRIEFS CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

Act does not regulate mercury contamination resulting from hydro-projects. The law, now under review, only regulates mercury released into the atmosphere by pulp and paper mills.

The Grand Council also recommended that the act require environmental reviews of major forestry developments and that Natives be included in federal-provincial advisory boards on the environment.

The parliamentary committee is to report back to the House of Commons by June.

—*Nation staff*

FRIENDSHIP CENTRE SEEKS HELP

The Native Friendship Centre of Montreal is desperate to find a bigger building and needs your help.

"We need help, we need donations, people to sit on our committees, we need contacts," says Linda Arkwright, who works at the centre.

The centre held a cocktail and brainstorming session in late November

to discuss fundraising ideas and talk about the new building. The meeting also gave everyone a chance to see some Native experimental theatre. Sylvie-Anne Sioui-Trudel, who wrote the play, also acted in it along with Michelle Audette, who is the centre's vice-president, Daniel-Paul Bork and Roger Wylde.

The play, called "The Step of Our Dances," was put on with the collaboration of Ajigwon, the Native Cultural Resource Centre.

The cultural centre has also been busy organizing its 2nd Consultation Circle, a forum where Natives and non-Natives can discuss ways to build bridges. The circle will take place in Otterburn Park south-east of Montreal from Nov. 31 to Dec. 2. For more information call (514) 464-0201.

—*Alex Roslin*

STAY OUT, MOHAWKS TELL SQ

Three Mohawk communities in southern Quebec have declared themselves no-go areas for the Surete du Quebec.

Coming On CBC TV Maamuitaau

December 3 & 4 (part 1) 10 & 11 (part 2)

Maamuitaau presents the two-part special, "Maamu Nikamutaau." Recorded live at Wemindji in July, "Maamu Nikamutaau" is a major Cree musical festival that draws talented acts from throughout the James Bay Region. Entertainers including Kenny Mianscum, Johnny T. Georgekish, Miyyobin, Pekasso Mukash, Miigwin, Chiistin, Larry Wapachee and others perform a variety of musical styles, from modern to traditional. Also on December 3 and 4 a vignette featuring traditional drummer David Neeposh. On December 10 and 11 we present a vignette highlighting James Stewart, his fiddle and his love for music.

Watch Maamuitaau:

Fridays	18:00	CBC North and TVNC
	22:00	CBC North and TVNC
Saturdays	06:45	SRC
Sundays	07:30	CBMT
	18:00	SRC
(subject to change)		

CBC  **North**

"We're putting the red lights up to the provincial police," said Kanehsatake Grand Chief Jerry Peltier in a *Gazette* story. "If they go through these lights, they are breaking the law—our law."

The Grand Chiefs of Kanehsatake, Kahnawake and Akwesasne said in a joint announcement on Nov. 18 that they would set up a Mohawk police force and keep the SQ out of their communities. The main focus is on Kanehsatake, where tensions with the SQ have flared repeatedly since the Oka crisis of 1990.

The Mohawk announcement followed a recent order by Quebec Justice Minister Serge Menard to the SQ to enforce the law in Kanehsatake just like anywhere else in Quebec. That order led Grand Chief Peltier to fear a repeat of the Oka crisis. "We're on the verge of a collision course," he said.

Menard was defiant after the Mohawk announcement. He said that if Mohawk Peacekeepers arrive at Kanehsatake from the other communities to help provide police services, "they might not be able to enforce infractions... They

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Caroline Grant (Leonard
Mattawashish) gave birth to
a boy 4 kg 540 gr.

On Oct. 20 at 8:57 a.m.,
Coon Joyce Hattie (Johnny
Matoush) gave birth to a
girl 3 kg 350 gr.

BIRTHS AT THE HOPITAL DE CHIBOUGAMAU

may find they have no legal status. And if they do something illegal, we may proceed against them."

—*Nation* staff

DROUIN STILL IN THERE

Richard Drouin, the president of Hydro-Quebec, is holding on to his job for another three years.

According to an article in *La Presse*, Drouin was told he can keep his job by Natural Resources Minister Francois Gendron on Oct. 28. That put an end to weeks of speculation that the Parizeau government was preparing to dump Drouin because of he was considered an ally of former Premier Robert Bourassa.

La Presse also reported that there will be a shake-up in the top leadership at Hydro-Quebec, with some executives possibly being replaced.

—*Nation* staff

NATIVE WOMEN SEEK MORE FUNDING

The new president of the Native Women's Association of Canada is calling on Ottawa to put its money where its mouth is and fund her group so it can adequately represent Native women.

"It's fine to say we have to listen," Walker said in a *Windspeaker* article. "Give us the funding to have our own voice."

One of the most important areas where Native women need more input, she added, is the ongoing federal effort to reform Canada's social programs. Many of the proposed reforms will hit Native women especially hard, which makes it important that their voices are heard. Walker also called on the provinces and territories to fund local women's organizations.

—*Nation* staff

DENE FIGHT NWT TAX SCHEME

The Northwest Territories is trying to tax Native people in the province but the Dene are fighting back.

Dene National Chief Bill Erasmus and the government exchanged fire for several days over a 1-per-cent payroll tax, which all territory residents are now required to pay. The NWT council approved the tax in 1993.

The Dene say they shouldn't be taxed since Ottawa guaranteed them tax-

NATHALIE COUTOU



Native Friendship Centre takes on Montreal's "finest" in volleyball match-up.

free status in treaties in 1899 and 1921. "By virtue of this, we've chosen not to comply," said Chief Erasmus in a *Globe and Mail* story.

"We held a meeting of the Dene National Assembly and our people instructed us not to."

The tax would affect as many as 6,000 Dene.

—*Nation* staff

B.C. SAYS NO TO THREE GORGES

British Columbia says it won't participate in China's \$50-billion Three Gorges Dam project, saying it doesn't support mega-projects.

Premier Michael Harcourt said there is a strong environmental ethic in B.C. "We don't allow uranium exploration or uranium mining or nuclear power," said Harcourt in a *Globe and Mail* story.

"For that, and other reasons, we are putting B.C. Hydro in those directions [small and medium hydro dams]."

B.C. Hydro had considered joining Ontario Hydro and Hydro-Quebec in a consortium seeking large hydro-electric contracts in China. Instead, Harcourt said B.C. Hydro will concentrate on small and medium-sized projects.

His decision split a Canadian trade mission to China that included Prime Minister Jean Chretien, nine premiers, two territorial leaders and two mayors.

Earlier on that mission, both Chretien and Ontario Premier Bob Rae spoke positively about Three Gorges, saying Canadian and Ontario businesses

have the technology to grab many of the contracts on the project.

The project would force more than 1 million people out of their homes. But Rae argued that the series of dams would reduce flooding on the Yangtze River, one of the largest in the world.

—*Nation* staff

MONTRÉAL POLICE BEAT

NATIVES (AT VOLLEYBALL)

Station 25 of the Montreal Urban Community Police Department invited the Native Friendship Centre of Montreal to a volleyball game on Thursday, November 17.

The heavily media-covered game was played at the Currie Sports Centre at McGill University.

I'm sad to report that the courageous Native team lost three matches out of four. And not without practice. The centre organizes games Thursday nights at the Ecole Dupuis at 5530 Dupuis St. Contact the centre and sign up. Show Montreal's "finest" that Natives are more than capable of whacking the pigskin around the court just as well as anybody.

Oh, by the way, the friendship centre has issued an informal challenge to *The Nation*.

Will *The Nation* accept as any self-respecting magazine should? We have yet to respond. Watch this space for an update and pix.

—Neil Diamond

GREAT WHALE CELEBRATES

After news spread that the Great Whale project was shelved indefinitely, the people of Whapmagoostui were overjoyed. Everybody was jumping around joyfully or shaking hands. Some people couldn't sleep for two days they were so excited. A celebration was planned.

We contacted Chief **Matthew Mukash** for his comments.

The Nation: You must be excited over Parizeau's recent comment that Great Whale had been put on the shelf indefinitely.

Chief Matthew Mukash: Yes, I was. I kept on asking myself what does he want? What next?

Do you suspect ulterior motives?

Yeah, I do. But I think that because he was very clear in his statement, I tend to think he's bound by his comments.

Do you feel this is a victory for your people?

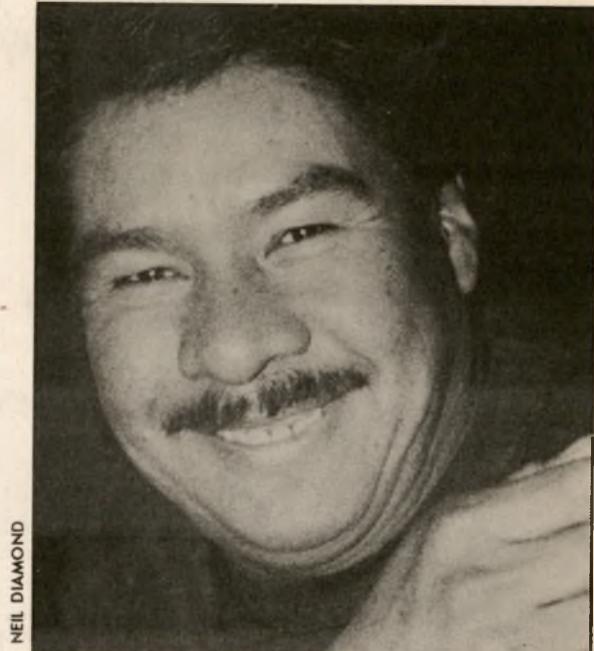
Indeed it is. It is a big victory.

This was part of your election platform. Do you feel that it's finished as part of your election platform and you're ready to move on to new mandates?

You know, there's still a lot of questions that have to be answered, I think, before our people can really be convinced this project has indeed been cancelled indefinitely.

Because we've heard remarks from a minister that the environmental assessment process for the project is going to continue.

To us, if the government is shelving the project indefinitely,



NEIL DIAMOND

they have to also cancel the process, and until we see that we're not going to be convinced that this project is dead.

The review committees made over 300 recommendations on the Hydro-Quebec study, and they said it didn't meet the guidelines. What are your comments on that?

I have to commend the review bodies for their work. I think they take their work seriously, and I was very happy to learn that there were 300 questions thrown back at Hydro.

Seeing that there has been a lot of money spent on the studies, over 11 years, I said to myself 300 questions is going to cost a little more. I'm sure there will be a reason for the government to ask questions of the Crown corporation. So I was very pleased that the report was thrown back at Hydro.

How do you react to Parizeau's attacks on the Grand Chief, Matthew Coon Come, when he said there was a racist double-standard being applied to the Crees?

I was not surprised. But we should remember what the government did in the early '70s when they pushed forward the idea of building hydro-dams in the north.

They started with building a highway right to the heart of Cree Territory without asking the Crees to begin with. And then they maintained in the courts that we have no rights and so on.

If you read the testimony of the lawyers for the province, there are a lot of racist comments in there. One of the comments that was made was that Native people are war-like and when they kill their enemy they eat their blood. They quoted Jesuits to state this.



Chief Billy Diamond (leaning forward, left) lights up some copies of the *Report of the Federal-Provincial Task Force Inquiring Into the Environmental Aspects of the James Bay project*, in Rupert House, February 1972.

When you think what was said in those days, we are right in saying the government does have racist policies against the Native people in the north.

Do you see any signs of that changing?

Not at all. When you hear a candidate for the PQ saying we're going to use the army to suppress the Crees if they don't agree with the idea of Quebec secession, what kind of a comment is that? Is it not a racist remark? Is it not looking down at people who've lived in this area since time immemorial?

You have to look at it from the perspective of the spiritual realm. We were put here for some reason. We know that the Creator provided us with everything we needed to survive on this land. And it was true for everybody. The Creator created four or five races. There was a means for each race to survive.

When you think along those lines, it is wrong for any race to try to step all over another race. For me, when I look at what's been happening to the Crees, there is indeed a lot of racism in the hearts of the people who run the government of Quebec.

Are you speaking specifically of people like Richard Le Hir?

I'm not speaking of any particular official in the government. Because in any

government we faced, there's always been people in there who have hated, who hate the people. What can I say? That's a fact.

We've always been called the "maudits sauvages." And I've heard many government officials using that term.

How did the community react when they heard this?

I was not here. I happened to be travelling to the north, to an Inuit community, at the time on Friday when it was announced. But I called in right away when I learned of the news. I didn't learn of the news until I got in to Inukjuak that evening. And immediately I went on the air to congratulate people.

What I learned was that everyone was jumping around joyfully and shaking hands. Everybody was shaking hands with everyone. People were just going wild.

A lot of people told me they started to cry when they heard the news. And I think a lot of people were in that state. A lot of them told me they couldn't sleep for two nights because they were so overjoyed by this whole thing.

Is your community planning celebrations?

We are planning celebrations for next Friday in this community.

Do you think this was overall a much-needed victory for all the Crees?

Yes, it is a much-needed victory for everyone. You have to remember Crees are not the only winners in this case. I think the people of Quebec are the winners as well and everybody who was concerned. You have to understand that these projects have an impact on the global climate. They have an impact on international waters.

When a project of this scale has an impact on the global climate, it affects everyone on this planet. I think we have to say everyone is a winner in this case. You have to stop thinking it is the Crees or the Inuit who are the only impacted people when you're talking about hydro-projects. So I think in this case everybody is a winner.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Well, I'd like to thank everyone for their support, the Crees and we had a lot of Inuit who supported us. Of course, everyone outside the Cree Nation. I think we had support from the four corners of the Earth.

I would like to thank all those people. Their efforts will be remembered in the hearts of my people.

The world according to Henri L. Comte

A leading media analyst spells out a macabre vision for the future of Quebec and the Crees

by Alex Roslin



ELL NEVER forget the date. October 21, 1991. That was the day that changed Henri L. Comte's life.

That day, a full-page ad appeared in the *New York Times* denouncing the Great Whale River Project. The ad, paid for by the Grand Council of the Crees, Greenpeace and other environmental groups, made Comte's blood boil. Here was Quebec being insulted in the world's most influential newspaper, and what's more, no one in Quebec seemed to care.

"I was sitting in my living room waiting for a reaction and they were doing nothing. They were letting all this go," says Comte, who is one of Quebec's most influential media analysts and is editor of *Publics*, a magazine for public relations workers in Quebec. "This has been going on for five years, this major offensive by the Crees."

That day, Comte decided he would be the one to defend Quebec's honour. In the office of his media consulting firm in Montreal, Comte flips open a glossy travel magazine to an article about Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come. Just days before, the magazine *Conde Nast Traveler* had awarded the Grand Chief a \$10,000 prize for his work to save the environment.

"I mean, five years later, this kind of misinformation is still going on," he says. "This whole thing is so biased, so..." Comte doesn't finish. He only sighs and shakes his head.

Comte is a man possessed. Possessed by an outlandish, imperial vision of Quebec's future, and obsessed with the Crees and the threat they pose to his vision. One part of Comte's vision is the Grand Canal project, a bizarre scheme promoted by U.S. engineering firms to build a dike across the top of James Bay and pump millions of gallons of fresh water through canals to irrigate the U.S. Mid-West.

Comte is wistful when he talks about the Grand Canal project, imagining that it could be for Quebec what the pyramids were for ancient Egypt's Pharaohs. "It's almost utopia. It's a dream," he says, a little

"The future is north...
We don't know what's up there.
Nickel, maybe diamonds.
It has to be explored."

lost in thought. "It's a little pharaonic."

Then, remembering the people who would be affected in James Bay, he adds, "But imagine the opposition..." And that seems to be why he's obsessed with the Crees. They're in the way.

Just how obsessed is Comte by the Crees? Every other week or so, you can be sure there will be an opinion piece or a letter to the editor in a major Quebec newspaper written by Comte about the Crees, usually denouncing the Grand Chief for this or Chief Mukash for that. Several maps of James Bay hang in the office of Medianor, Comte's media consulting company. He's been spending his spare time studying an academic essay written by Grand Council advisor Brian Craik about hunting patterns among west coast Crees 200 years ago.

Every Sunday for a year, Comte has been watching *Maamuitaau* even though he doesn't understand Cree (the show isn't subtitled). He constantly litters his conversation with references to discussions he's had with various Cree personalities ("I was talking to Romeo last week...") He reads *The Nation* religiously ("I scrutinize it").

And soon there will be an entire book filled with Comte's views on the Crees timed to come out on the 20th anniversary of the signing of the James Bay Agreement next year. In Comte's words, the book will be about "how they came to use the media in the public relations war against Hydro-Quebec and, in brackets, against the Quebec people."

Just to be sure, I asked Comte point-blank in his office: Is this an obsession for you, the Crees? A little embarrassed, he grinned and said, "Yeah."

"Stop asking me about my clients"

HARD AS it may be to believe, in person Comte isn't at all the menacing man his views might suggest. He is slight of build, friendly and curious, in his late 30s and has a boyish mop of sandy blond hair. He talks eagerly about what he believes in and has hardly any humility. But he is also easily provoked into suspicion and seems to be an unsettled individual. A sort of boy-genius gone bad. At one point he described himself as "kind of a loner... It's hard to get along with me."

Comte's office in Montreal is straight out of George Orwell's book *1984*. Lining one wall is a bank of TV sets, each set to a different channel, where his employees record news shows and transcribe them for clients. Along another wall are a dozen ghetto blasters, each tuned to a different radio station. Every major newspaper in Quebec is read here and analyzed for shifting trends in public opinion.

Medianor, the fastest growing media consulting firm in Quebec, makes its money by selling daily reviews and analyses of what the media is saying about different issues to big

companies, federal and provincial departments and foreign governments. Before starting Medianor, Comte made quite a name for himself by helping to start three other media consulting firms in Quebec. He is probably more responsible than anyone for putting the media-analysis industry on the map in this province. And one of his main specialties is following what Quebec's media is saying about the Crees.

Comte admits that attracting business for his company is a big reason for all this writing about Crees in the newspapers. "Whenever I go out in the media, it's my own personal signature and since I own Medianor I take the opportunity to get some advertising at the same time," he says. The articles are his way of making potential clients believe he can provide them with valuable information about the Crees—even though on some occasions he's proven to be poorly informed.

Some examples: Comte recently stated in a letter to *The Nation* that the top Cree leaders are appointed by the nine Chiefs (in fact, the Grand Chief and Deputy Grand Chief are elected by all Crees). He's stated matter-of-factly that there are three churches in Chisasibi (there are only two). And earlier this year he wrote a bizarre 1,000-word opinion piece in *La Presse* claiming that Crees in the northern communities are all radicals and Crees in the southern communities are all moderate and support Hydro-Quebec.

Comte won't reveal who his clients are or what he makes in a year, and he got edgy when asked what percentage of his business is related to the Crees ("stop asking me about my clients"). But he does admit that he's worked for the Parti Quebecois and Bloc Quebecois.

Which makes sense because, like Jacques Parizeau himself, Comte's got big plans for Quebec. And they involve exploiting Cree lands like crazy.

"Some of my friends told me not to say this," he confides, then goes on anyhow, "but the North hasn't been explored. We don't know what's up there. Nickel, maybe diamonds. It has to be explored. There are a lot of riches to be explored and there's a lot of room, despite what some people say."

The Ayatollah of James Bay?

THE WAY Comte sees it, Crees stand in the way of the future. "The future is north. The future is up there whether you like it or not," he says. "Water is a major commodity in Canada. Sixty per cent of the rivers flow north. That can't stay forever because it's in the south that you need water. Something will happen. If it doesn't come from Canadians or Quebecers, I don't know if the Americans will be thirsty enough to convince us to do it."

And that's why Comte gets his back up about the Crees. They block an otherwise glorious future for Quebec. Comte feels it's his mission to show Quebecers how much the Crees are hurting them with their international campaign. "This thing with the Crees, it's a niche for me because there's not enough people out there who take an interest in it," he says. "I'm getting people to realize that we're not on an island here. There are people on boats out there spreading false rumours."

Yet, Comte doesn't blame the average Cree for this anti-Quebec campaign. He points the finger at "radical" leaders like Grand Chief Coon Come. They blindly fight against the Great Whale River

NEIL DIAMOND



Project, he argues, while the average Cree couldn't care less and just wants a job(!)

Comte has little patience for rhetoric about the traditional Cree way of life, which he believes only the Elders still want to preserve. "Crees say their traditional way of life for 5,000 years is threatened. Bullshit. Fifty years ago, the traditional way of life of the Quebecois was to live on the land and they were told not to go to the city and prostitute themselves for the Protestants. There's a lot of parallels between the two."

Comte even speaks of a mysterious conspiracy behind the Cree churches. "Diamond, Coon Come and Blacksmith seem to be very morally and religiously inclined in a certain direction. Is it the Baptists, the Pentecostals?" he asks. "Who's behind these churches? Ontario? The States? What are they trying to do? Who are they trying to convert? How does the money flow? All these things warrant investigation."

"When the political elite becomes the spiritual elite, it becomes a little like the Ayatollah Khomeini. It's like a theocracy."

But after all this, Comte still has a bit of good will left over for the Crees. Throughout our interview, he professed a deep concern and sympathy for Cree society. He spoke of the need for youth centres, jobs and economic development, a solution to the social problems like family violence and substance abuse. "What is Creeness?" he asks. Creeness, he says, is under threat. "The social [aspect] is disintegrating. The political is being overplayed. The spiritual is caught in the middle. The economy is at a standstill."

What's needed, Comte proposes, is "a rapprochement" between Crees and Quebecers. "We are condemned to live together," he says. "How long are we going to be fighting?"

And coming from a man of Comte's ambitions, that's a sign of hope for Crees. His call for a truce is an acknowledgement that Quebec can no longer mess with the Crees. As Comte admits, "The Crees have a world role now." In the aftermath of the postponement of Great Whale, Comte teaches us two valuable lessons: Dangerous ideas still lurk about. But the Crees are a force to be reckoned with.

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Santé Québec: A health profile of the Cree

(Final report of the Santé Québec health survey, 1991; about 200 pages)



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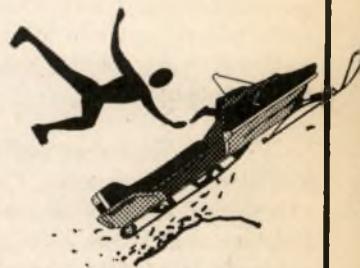
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- Cree region,
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Montreal, QC. H3H 2S2
Telephone 514-989-1013 Fax 514-989-7273

Et la santé des Cris, ça va? (Rapport final de l'Enquête Santé Québec auprès des Cris de la Baie James, 1991; environ 200 pages).

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If your team is chosen, \$1,000 is waiting for you. All you have to do is be one of the first two teams to present our certificate at registration. But the money isn't yours until you find other sponsors for the remaining \$4,400. Once you've done that, you're set to ride.

For more information on the race,
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For more information about getting
sponsored, call *The Nation* at (514) 272-3077.

CHEW ON THIS: IT'S LOW IN CALORIES

Ernest Webb
Catherine Bainbridge

A much-awaited study on the health of the Crees has been released. It all began in 1989 with meetings between the Quebec Health Ministry and the Cree Health Board. The mandate was given: Find out the state of the Crees' well-being.

So Crees were trained in Montreal on how to conduct interviews for what would turn out to be the most comprehensive survey ever done on our health. The heads of 354 households were interviewed (usually the woman), covering about 1,000 adults and 1,000 children. This massive survey has now resulted in a full-scale report called, "A Health Profile of the Crees."

What the results of the survey show, says James Bobbish in the introduction to the report, is that aside from high infant mortality rates, Crees were much healthier before modern conveniences, living in towns and eating store-bought food and all the social and cultural upheaval that has come with these new things.

Our biggest health problems, he notes, are in the areas of eating habits and lifestyle. And we have to change them.

The Nation brings you some of the results of the study. If you want to see the full report, copies have been sent to all clinics and Band Councils and it is available in French and English.

If you want a workshop or discussion group to be organized in your community, call Elizabeth Robinson in Montreal at 514-989-1013.

WHO WE ARE

OUR LANGUAGE

96% of Crees have Cree as their mother tongue
91% use only Cree at home
2/3 know either English or French (generally English)
15% know English and French

OUR RELIGION

85% of us believe that prayer and religion are important to our well-being
Coastal communities: 80% are Anglican
Inland communities: 50% Anglican, 50% Pentecostal
The ones who go to church the most: women, Pentecostals and older people

OUR WORK (for those 15 years and older)

Hunters and trappers: 22%
Managers and professionals: 9%
Office employees: 21%
Blue collar (construction etc.): 15%
Work at home: 13%
Retired/welfare: 10%
Unemployment insurance: 3%
Other: 8%

THE BUSH

32% of Crees of all ages make one or more trips to the bush totalling at least 120 days in the bush each year

HOUSING IN TOWN

Almost 50% of Cree households have six or more people living there. In Quebec the average household has only three people.

OUR LIFESTYLE

Bad habits like smoking, drinking, taking drugs, eating badly, and living like a coach potato are the major contributors to getting serious disease. They will most likely shorten your life and lower the quality of your existence on Earth.

CIGARETTES

Without a doubt smoking causes the most deaths. 50,000 people in Canada die each year because of smoking (heart disease, circulatory problems, lung cancer).

37% of Cree deaths are attributed to lung cancer and circulatory problems

41% of all Crees smoke regularly. Only 34% of Quebecers smoke regularly. (But Crees smoke fewer cigarettes per day than people in Quebec.)

37% of Crees are ex-smokers

9% have never smoked

61% of 15-24 year-olds smoke regularly (twice as high as young people in Quebec)

ALCOHOL

Alcohol abuse is associated with many serious health problems (cirrhosis of the liver, upper digestive tract cancer and death or injury in vehicle accidents). It is also associated with social problems, especially violence.

27% of Crees are habitual drinkers (i.e. they consume alcohol once a month or more)

22% are occasional drinkers (consuming alcohol less than once a month)

28% are ex-drinkers

25% never touched the stuff

60% of the Quebec population are habitual drinkers

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

HABITS OF CREE DRINKERS

Most Crees who drink said they took more than five drinks at a session. (This is often called binge drinking and is more common among Crees drinkers than Quebecers. A binge drinker doesn't drink every day or even every week, but when they drink, they drink to get very drunk.)

Inland: 83% of drinkers said they were heavy drinkers

Coastal: 55% of drinkers said they were heavy drinkers

17% of men and 7% of women have been injured in fights while drinking

DRUGS

Marijuana and hashish: 46% of men (20-24) had used them during the last 12 months

32% of women had tried them

Cocaine or crack: 12% of men (20-24) had tried it

4% of women had tried it

484 people have tried cocaine or crack

Solvents: 10% said they sniffed glue, gasoline or solvents in their lifetime

Solvents were used more by 15-19 year olds

628 people have tried solvents

Drugs in general: Very few women over 25 take drugs. However, one out of every five men aged 25-44 report using drugs

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Regular physical activity makes you feel great. It is good for your body, mind and spirit. It helps protect you against heart disease, obesity and makes you strong. In the bush, less than 3% of us are inactive.

We are busy doing physical work everyday.

But in town, it is very different. 50% of us sit around and are sedentary mostly every day in town. Inactive or sedentary means you usually sit during the day and don't walk around very much.

70% of the population is not physically active during their leisure time.

42% of females and 24% of males do very little physical activity at all (work, daily activities, leisure)



OUR FOOD AND NUTRITION

It is now a recognized fact all over the world that poor food or too much food are associated with serious health problems: obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, intestinal disease and cancer. These diseases, especially diabetes, were unknown to us before white food.

Before contact with Europeans, we ate mostly meat, fish and fat. We also ate wild fruit and plants such as Labrador tea and lichen, which are major sources of vitamins and minerals. We tend to value highly the fatty parts of our meat (caribou marrow, beaver tail) because in the past we needed those calories to survive.

If you only ate the lean parts, you would have to consume enormous quantities of meat to get the calories you need. It's not

the same today. When flour, sugar and lard were introduced, they helped stave off famine, but they added even more calories to our diet. And now, when many of us live an inactive lifestyle in town, our eating habits, especially eating too much fat, are making us unwell.

SOME FACTS

Most Crees use fat for cooking. 46% of cooks usually fry meat and fish. Only 33% usually boil them.

73% eat fat with their meat or fish

Why many of us don't eat vegetables:

Family does not like them: 39%

The respondent didn't like the taste: 28%

Vegetables were not available in the community: 22%

The respondent felt they cost too much: 14%

To us, poor food is white food. Yet for convenience, because we live in town and for lack of time, we eat a lot of unhealthy store bought food.

OBESITY

Many studies show that if you weigh too much you have an increased chance of dying because of hypertension, diabetes and cardio-vascular disease. It is also associated with increased blood pressure and an increase in total cholesterol. Obesity is a serious problem in aboriginal communities.

57% of Cree women (18-74) are obese, compared to 28% of Cree men

Only 13% of Quebecers are obese

1/3 of all Crees said they would like to lose weight

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WOMEN'S PREVENTATIVE HEALTH PRACTICES

This refers to precautions taken by women to prevent health problems, mainly breast cancer and cervical cancer.

CERVICAL CANCER

All women 18 and over should have regular pap tests. These tests look at your uterus (cervix) and can detect cancer at an early stage and save your life.

69% of Cree women had a pap test
81% of Quebec woman have had one

BREAST EXAMS

They can save your life by detecting breast cancer early on
Only 35% of Cree woman have had a breast examination compared to 81% of Quebec women

SOCIAL

Many people now believe that our social life (friends and family, people we can count on) is important for our good health. Stressful events (death of a loved one, losing our job, moving) have negative effects on our health. Stressful feelings (fights with the family, rejection by the community, bottled up anger, tension at work) also affect your well-being and good health.

We are close communities with large families. Our families can be the best place for us to get support. But at the same time, in our communities, where social pressure is a very powerful force, our families can also be the source of lots of stress.

OUR SUPPORT NETWORKS

More men than women said they had a lot of friends.
Men said they had more people they could count on than women.

Coastal (people 45 and older): 45% said they could count on five people or more in times of need

Inland (people 45 and older): Only 20% said they could count on five people or more.

But in general, 1/2 of Crees said they were very satisfied with their relationships with other members of the community. Only 1/3 of Quebecers could say the same.

OUR SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Social problems cause stress to the individual, family and community and therefore affect our health and well being. People were given a list of social problems and were asked to rate which were serious problems in their community.

82% alcohol abuse
81% young people getting in trouble with the law (theft, vandalism)
77% illegal drugs
77% loss of respect for the Elders among young people
70% public fights and disturbances
68% children neglected by their parents
64% spousal abuse. Physical and verbal violence between husband and wife
For every problem, more residents of inland villages said it was serious than did residents of coastal villages.

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WHAT WE THINK OF OUR HEALTH

25% think they are in very good health
52% think they are in good health
21% think they are in fair health
2% think they are in bad health
Fewer Crees from inland villages think they are in very good health than coastal (17% versus 31%).

Southern Quebecers tended to rate their health as "good" when they were young, and the rating got worse as they got older. But this is not the case with the Crees. Elders tended to rate their health almost as well as younger people.

MENTAL HEALTH

The evaluation of mental health is based on 1) if you feel very distressed a lot of the time (not related to a specific experience), and 2) if you have suicidal thoughts or have attempted suicide.

Elders said they had very little distress (2%) and those 45-65 (4%). However, young people, particularly young women (15-24), experience the highest amount of psychological distress (30%).

In general, it is twice as high for single people than those who were married.

Here are the percentages of people who were rated as feeling high levels of general distress:

RELATIONSHIPS

Married: 15%
Separated/divorced: 26%
Widowed: 3%
Single: 26%

EDUCATION

Elementary: 8%
Secondary: 25%
Post-secondary: 23%

TYPE OF OCCUPATION

Professional/manager/office worker: 25%
Blue collar/self-employed: 18%
Trapper: 8%
Housekeeper: 15%
Not working: 22%



PROFESSIONALS AND
OFFICE WORKERS AND THE
UNEMPLOYED HAD THE
HIGHEST LEVELS OF DISTRESS
WHILE TRAPPERS ARE LIVING
THE CALMEST LIVES.

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

Your chances of having a heart attack or stroke are higher if you have high blood pressure or high cholesterol. Cigarettes, lack of exercise, obesity and diabetes also increase your chances.

13% of Crees have high blood pressure (about 646 people)
50% don't know they have it

73% of men versus 21% of women are unaware they have it

DIABETES

Diabetes can be detected by testing your blood sugar level early in the morning before eating. People with a high level likely have diabetes. Diabetes can lead to losing your eyesight, having an amputation or having to be on a dialysis machine because your kidneys have failed. This can happen after 20 years with diabetes.

Most Crees have not had diabetes that long.

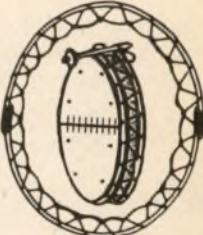
10% of Crees (18-74) said they had diabetes (compared to 5% of Quebec adults)

More women than men suffer from it (8% in women 2% in men). It can be treated with a better diet, losing weight, pills or insulin.

GRAND COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS



Grand Council of the Crees (of Quebec) Grand Conseil des Cris (du Québec)



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CREE REGIONAL AUTHORITY
ADMINISTRATION RÉGIONALE CRIE

PARIZEAU DOES THE GREAT WHALE JIG

On Friday, November 18th at around 2 o'clock, Premier Parizeau announced that the Great Whale Project would "be put on ice for quite a long time." He went on to say, "...as far as we are concerned, it is not a priority." The announcement from the Premier was applauded as a courageous first step in the right direction by Grand Chief Coon Come, as well as members of the environmental movement, both in Quebec and abroad.

Those words were soon to be watered down by the provincial government. Merely hours later, Mr. Parizeau's chief aide, Mr. Hubert Thibault, started to lessen the impact of the announcement. He said that although the Great Whale Project was delayed, the environmental review process of the project would continue as scheduled. "We are giving Hydro-Quebec no instructions to stop their preparation of the project." On Monday, a scant three days after his announcement Mr. Parizeau, speaking before labour leaders, stated that Great Whale might be built "in two, three or maybe even 10 years."

What does all this mean? Is the Great Whale Project cancelled or is this just another political ploy? The announcement of the delay to the project means little if the environmental review process continues; especially since the Committees undertaking the review of HQ's Feasibility Study have stated that there are "major inadequacies" which render the assessment of impacts impossible to determine. So a delay in the project is inevitable. But by continuing with the review process, Hydro-Quebec hopes to get

authorizations for the GWR project in the near future and utilize them to construct the project when it wants to, irrespective of the environmental/social impact criteria present in the future.

Hydro-Quebec has already used such a tactic to commence construction of the Lac Robertson dam. It acquired the authorizations five years before the dam was built, even though the environmental criteria and justification for the dam were outdated!

The Eastmain project has suffered a similar fate. A court decision in November 1992 stated that because the Eastmain project was part of the La Grande 1975 project, it was exempt from environmental assessment in 1992. The agreement foresaw that an environmental assessment was required for all hydro-electric works in the territory.

The Great Whale Project is not justified on environmental, social or economic grounds. Mr. Parizeau's announcement may not be a courageous first step in the right direction but rather, a political dance in an attempt to silence the Cree Nation. If Mr. Parizeau were sincere about the indefinite cancellation of the Great Whale Project, he should follow words with action and formally order Hydro-Quebec to cease all work on the environmental assessment process. Until then Mr. Parizeau's government does not distance itself from previous ones. A true measure of how his government will act in the future towards Native peoples and other minorities are those actions undertaken today. So far, it's politics as usual!

Partners in Education

by Emily Rondeau

THE CREE School Board's "Partners in Education" conference took place in Chisasibi on the 15th, 16th and 17th of November, 1994. Delegates were brought to the conference by Air Creebec and Air Inuit charters. (Air Wemindji were grounded and couldn't be used.)

The organizers were expecting 500 people to attend and they were not far off the mark. Everyone involved in education such as teachers, school committees, consultants, directors and coordinators were invited.

There was a grand entry of delegates with Elders and youth flag carriers entering first. The entry was accompanied by drumming of the David Cox Memorial Singers. The flags were the four colours of mankind: red, yellow, black and white.

Prayers were conducted in Cree and more drumming followed with all delegates gathered in a large circle in the gym. There was a special solo drum song by Elder David Neeposh of Waswanipi. A sacred fire was lit and maintained 24 hours a day in a teepee outside the school during the whole conference.

There was also a sweat lodge at milleage 61 for those who wanted healing. Anyone wishing to go was driven back and forth. Elders William and Sarah Ratt even built a camp in case some delegates wanted traditional accommodations.

The all-important practice of inviting Elders to sit with the delegates was done and it was considered very helpful. They were also invited to speak. (David and Suzanne Neeposh, Robbie and Sally Matthew Sr., William and Sarah Ratt, Robbie and Elizabeth Dick, Clifford and Juliet Bearskin were among the Elders.)

In one of the opening speeches that were made, Director-General Janie



NEIL DIAMOND
Pachano spoke about her trip to all the communities to meet with students. She said she found out many things that are causing problems for them.

Apparently, there is a very high drop-out rate among high school students. Currently, the high school graduation rate is only at 17 per cent. Boys drop out more often than girls.

Some people suggested that a Cree CEGEP might better prepare students to study down south. Since some students finish high school very young, they may find it more difficult to be away from home and family to attend CEGEP and university.

The Youth Task Force in Education were also invited. This group of youth headed by Glen Cooper went to all the Cree communities and the southern cities that have large numbers of Cree post-secondary students (Ottawa, Montreal, North Bay). They met with students to hear their concerns and a preliminary report was issued.

The students going to school in the south don't feel at home at the Cree School Board offices and they also feel like they no longer have any real contact with their communities. They feel they are on their own too much when certain problems arise.

This can be one of the reasons why they decide to leave school and return home. The school board is trying ways to give better support to post-secondary students.

It was obvious to everyone that the youth voice must be heard. They often feel they are talked about behind closed doors and never get to give their side of the story.

Natazia Mukash also told about certain problems encountered by the secondary students of Badabin Eyou School in Whapmagoostui and how alone they felt when no one from the school or the Cree School Board regional office would support

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21



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2nd posting

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

THE COUNCIL OF THE NEMASKA FIRST NATION HEREBY INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING POSITION:

TITLE: DIRECTOR OF POLICE

NATURE OF WORK:

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DUTIES: As per attached to Job Description

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Minimum of 5 years experience as a regular constable.
- Must possess some administrative skills.
- Ability to work independently with leadership skills.
- Secondary 5 graduate or equivalent working experience.
- Be 18 years of age and of Native ancestry.
- Speak English (Cree and French would be an asset).
- Must possess valid driver's permit.
- Good physical condition, and good moral character.
- No criminal record.

CONDITIONS:

- Potential Applications are subject to in-depth background screening and examination.
- Full-Time permanent position.
- Ability and commitment to working with local Wellness Team and Council.
- Successful candidate must reside in Nemaska and be willing to interact in positive manner with community.

APPLICANTS MUST SUBMIT:

- Fully complete resume.
- List of References.
- Educational Documentation, accreditation or Certifications.
- Medical and Physical examination records (up-dated).

PLACE OF WORK: Nemaska, Quebec

SALARY: Commensurate with salary scale of Nemaska Police Services

DEAD-LINE FOR APPLICATIONS: The posting was open as of October 31, 1994. Interested persons should submit their applications NO LATER THAN December 2, 1994 (17:00 hrs)

Interested Candidates should submit their Applications, Resumes, and inquiries to:

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Interim Director of Operations
Nemaska First Nation
Nemaska, Quebec
JOY 3B0

Tel: (819) 673-2512
Fax: (819) 673-2542

Partners in Education...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

them. She said certain students felt threatened by a teacher when he took students into a classroom one at a time to interrogate them.

Another issue that came up over and over is that the Cree children start school so early, at age four. People say that at four years a child is not even able to speak his or her language properly. Veteran teacher of Cree culture, Margaret Bearskin, said that at age four a child should still be taught from its mother's arm and that it is like we are just letting go of our child for someone else to look after.

Some teachers of these young students say that at times they feel like baby-sitters because the children need more attention. The size of the class in these lower grades also makes it difficult to really give a child the time he or she needs and wants from the teacher.

One major concern was that there is not much parental involvement in our local schools. When Indian Affairs ran the schools, the parents were actually discouraged from coming into the school and this may be one of the reasons why some parents, even today, don't feel welcome in the school.

Another teacher, Sarah Herodier, spoke about the bitter disappointment she sees in children who know that no one from their family will come to the classroom on parents' night. She suggested that if a parent can't come, maybe someone else from the family can take their place. Even young children benefit from family support.

People who work in Cree programs and teachers who teach Cree culture want Cree language and culture to be very prominent in the schools, since this IS the Cree School Board. Some teachers who took a group of children to a camp for 10 days told of how happy the children were and how reluctant they were to return to Chisasibi. She said they told her that they wanted to stay another day, another week, another year.

Psychologist Dr. Renee Stevens of McGill University gave a workshop on "How to Better Prepare Our Students for Studying in the South," and a short discussion followed.

There was a Global Education Plan progress report given by Susan Runnels, director of Education Services, and Emmet Nolan, Supervisor of Schools. People who took part in this workshop discussed



Professional Development, Instructional Services, Cree Programs and Student Services, and wrote their recommendations on these various projects and activities. Their ideas will be compiled and sent to their schools for further discussion and study. Emmet Nolan also mentioned that the Cree School Board has been in existence since 1978 and much energy had to be given to building schools in each community in the beginning years.

As far as the Cree Language of Instruction Program is concerned, the Grade 1 program is complete and implemented in Whapmagoostui, Wemindji, Chisasibi and Waskaganish in 1995-96. The Grade 4 program is to be developed in 1995-96 and the target date for implementation in Chisasibi and Waskaganish is 1996-97. People involved agree that children taught in their own language understand better and so therefore learn faster when taught in their own language.

School Board Chairman Paul Gull conducted a workshop of the school committees. He says that their role could change significantly and that they will have more power. Some teachers feel that certain school committees are not as involved as they were in the past. The teachers apparently enjoyed meeting with them too so that their concerns could be addressed. These committees play a big role in the selection of teachers but they feel that they often don't have the final word.

The school committees were also wondering about political involvement in their decision-making, especially when they get recommendations from their local Band Council.

Paul Gull said it is helpful for the Band Councils to be involved in the education of the children. Some wondered why one must be a parent before he can sit on the school committee.

There seems to be apathy among some of the Cree population as far as their local school is involved and one delegate from Wemindji said that in a recent meeting for the election of the local school commissioner, less than 20 people showed up.

The week ended with a special catered banquet (all lunches and suppers were catered) by Jean-Paul Beauregard with a large team of assistants, most of whom were women from Chisasibi in the main gym. Gifts and acknowledgements were given out to the large number of people who made this conference possible. Again this was accompanied by drumming, prayers and carrying of the flags.



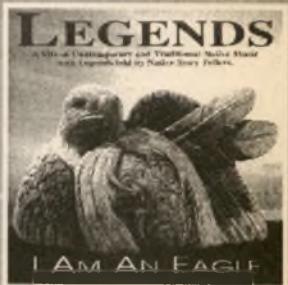
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"SUPPORT FOR THE CREE HAS NOT BEEN WEAKENED HERE."

Letter to the Editor: PROTECT is a grassroots organization which has advocated for wilderness preservation in the James Bay region since 1982. We've worked particularly hard on this issue since the 1990 Voyage of the ODEYAK. We participated in the successful campaigns that culminated with cancellation of both major energy contracts between New York and Hydro-Quebec.

PROTECT's part in the New York James Bay Network has mainly been to coordinate efforts by hundreds of other organizations ranging from members of "The Big Ten" environmental giants to student, church and labour networks and small, local groups.

For a few days during the past week, many of us in the New York James Bay Network and in New England hoped that indeed the Great Whale Project was

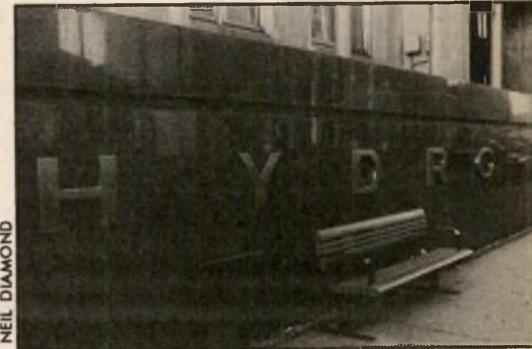
shelved by Premier Parizeau.

Now after several days we realize that unless the regulatory (environmental review) process is permanently shut down on Hydro-Quebec's current application for that project, the project is still very much alive.

We therefore wish to make it clear that our position remains equally alive. Our support has not been shaken. Whatever the purpose may have been to suggest the project is cancelled when in fact it may not be, support for the Crees' NEIL DIAMOND

position has not been weakened here. Our Cree friends and their representatives will always be welcome here. We will continue to pay attention to their concerns. After all, we're practically neighbours. The world grows smaller every day: A "global economy" makes brethren of us all.

GUIDE



Hydro-electric development, forestry and mining, and Cree rights are serious issues of global consequence which are profoundly interrelated. PROTECT believes that none of those issues will be entirely settled until all of them are resolved.

Doris Delaney for PROTECT
(Prudent Residents Opposed to
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CLASSIFIEDS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

Happy Birthday to our beautiful daughter Beverly-Ann Meskino who will be turning 7 years old on Nov. 27. Love always mom and dad

Happy Birthday to our sister Beverly-Ann Meskino on Nov. 27 and to our cousin Brian Pepabano on Nov. 28. From Derek and Curtis.

Happy belated birthday to my sister Alice & brothers Gordon & Wesley on Nov. 13. Hey Gordon what did you do on that day? Send me a few lines. Wesley & I partied at my place. Don't know what happened to Alice. Dad did a good job huh? I love u: Kitty

Happy 1st Birthday to Claudia Blacksmith on Dec. 13 and also to my sweetest cousin Carla Iserhoff who will be 4 yrs old on Dec. 18. P.S. be good kids! Don't grow fast! With hugs and kisses Naomi B.

We want to wish a happy birthday to Richard Bosum on Nov. 29. Don't party at all, stay home and study. Love mom, dad and family. We miss you. Ouje-Bougoumou.

A belated birthday wish to Stanley Bosum on Nov. 11. Hope your wishes came true. Love & prayers, mom, dad & family. We miss you a lot. Ouje-Bougoumou

A belated birthday wish to Louise Capassosit on Nov. 14. Hope you had a wonderful time. Love and prayers, mom, dad and family. Ouje-Bougoumou

Happy happy Birthday Jennifer. We love you & we miss you. xxoo Dad & mom

Happy belated birthday to Mommy. Love and kisses. Andrea & Patricia. Plus: A birthday wish to our son, Errol. Sorry it's late. Love & prayers, dad, mom & Jon & twins

102-WEDDINGS

Best wishes and Congratulations to Tina & Leslie, Jennifer & Roderick on Oct. 11 and Shirley & Roy Snowboy on Oct. 21. Fr. Margaret-Rose and Ralph House.

103-ANNIVERSARIES

Happy 12th Anniversary to Mary-Ann and Michael Snowboy on Nov. 2 and many more to come. Fr. John, Violet, Janie, Ralph, Norman, Justin, Ray & Margaret

Happy 10th Anniversary to mom & dad Marlene & Roger Dixon on November 6, 1994 with love your daughter Dixonish

Happy Anniversary to Patricia & Floyd on Nov. 20th. Fr. Janie.

Happy 26th Anniversary to our parents Robbie and Maudie Matthew on Nov. 20th. With lots of love from your children and grandchildren

I would like to wish a happy anniversary to my brother Wesley & wife Louise on Nov. 14. Hey Wesley were you hung over? I was hoping next year will be better & hope Louise will be with us next time. Too bad baby wasn't born then. Love you fr: Kitty

201-WANTED

Desperately seeking ride to the Big Apple between 20th of Dec. and New Years. Contact: Tim c/o Neil at The Nation. Egoodeh aa

Where there's a will there's a way. Need a fridge, stove, living room set, bedroom set, washer, dryer, microwave, VCR, 29 inch TV, if you wanna sell. Please, phone. 418-748-6718. Give me the price. Thank-you. Jacleen A.

300-PERSONALS

I would like to thank Mr. & Mrs. Bosum fr: Ojay, Que. God richly bless you and comfort your family. Thank you for helping me with everything. We love you always Lincoln and Jackee.

500-MISCELLANEOUS

Hello! I'm over here in Niagara Falls. Believe it or not? I'm studying, I miss my family, my friends and Eric. I love u all, see u at X-mas DDHG

Get your X-mas messages in early. Some assembly required.

ENTREPÔT PRIX

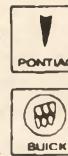
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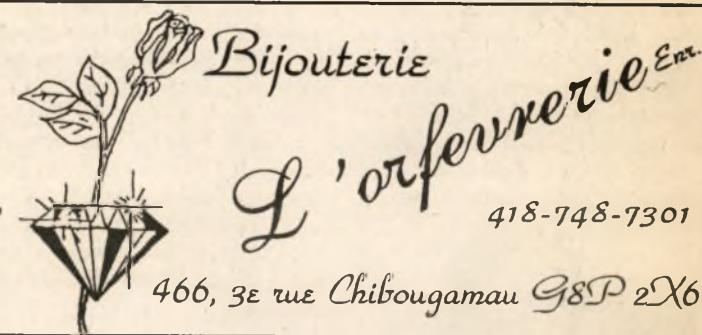
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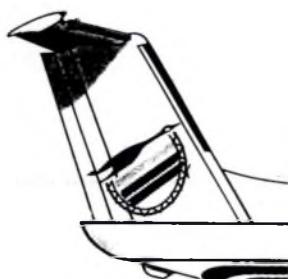
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